

What is claimed is:

5 *Sub A1* 1. A teaching system for use by a user with a user processor for teaching the user information, said system comprising:

a distance learning program having a URL structure of linked pages accessible by the user via the user processor wherein the linked pages include the information to be taught of the user; and

a tracker software program tracking the user's progress through the linked pages of the distance learning program and creating a history file of pages visited by the user, said history file remotely stored on a server for independent access by the user via the user processor and by a teacher via a teacher processor.

2. The teaching system of claim 1 wherein the distance learning program further comprises a site map for graphically displaying the URL structure of linked pages to the user via the user processor, and wherein the site map displays to the user via the user processor and/or teacher via the teacher processor the user's progress based on the history file.

3. The teaching system of claim 2 wherein the site map is generated by a web crawler program.

4. The teaching system of claim 2 wherein the site map is color coded to indicate the pages previously visited by the user, the page currently being visited by the user, and/or the pages not previously visited by the user.

5. The teaching system of claim 2 wherein the site map allows the user to return to the last page of the distance learning program visited by the user during a previous session.

6. The teaching system of claim 2 wherein the site map comprises a tree view of the URL structure of the distance learning program.

7. The teaching system of claim 2 wherein the site map comprises a outline view of the URL structure of the distance learning program.

8. The teaching system of claim 2 further comprising a note created by the user and attached to any object page of the site map selected by the user, said note displayed to the user and/or teacher on the site map.

9. The teaching system of claim 1 wherein the tracker software program is stored on the user processor.

10. The teaching system of claim 1 wherein the URL structure of linked pages is targeted to a beginning page of the distance learning program.

11. The teaching system of claim 1 wherein the distance learning program comprises at least one course having a URL structure of linked pages and a course beginning page, and wherein the URL structure of linked pages for each course is targeted to the course beginning page for the respective course.

12. The teaching system of claim 11 wherein each course further comprises a unit level of pages and at least a section level of pages and wherein the course beginning page is URL linked to the respective course unit level of pages and the unit level pages are in turn URL linked to the respective course section level of pages.

13. The teaching system of claim 1 wherein the URL structure of linked pages comprises a URL for each linked page and wherein the tracker software program stores the URL for each linked page visited by the user in the history file.

14. The teaching system of claim 1 wherein the distance learning program has a file system directory structure and wherein the URL structure of linked pages is independent of the file system directory structure.

15. The teaching system of claim 1 wherein the tracker software program comprises a Java applet.

16. A method for tracking and displaying a user's progress through a distance learning program having a URL structure of linked pages accessible by a user with a user processor, said pages including information to be taught to the user, and a site map for graphically displaying the URL structure of linked pages to the user via the user processor, said method comprising:

tracking the user's progress through the linked pages of the distance learning program; creating a history file of pages visited by the user, said history file remotely stored on a server for independent access by the user via the user processor and a teacher via a teacher processor;

receiving a request from the user for a site map of the distance learning program; and displaying the user's progress based on the history file to the user via the site map, said site map displayed to the user via the user processor.

17. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

receiving a request from the teacher for a site map of the distance learning program;

and

displaying the user's progress based on the history file to the teacher via the site map, said site map displayed to the teacher via the teacher processor.